

high desert sketches

The Blind Bard of the Big Bend's year in review

By **GEORGE A. COVINGTON**

As my readers may or may not know, I have a team of intelligent ne'er-do-wells who assist me in the writing of this column. This week, I introduce two of my brightest assistants and highlight the best quotes and illustrations from this year's High Desert Sketches.

Melissa Amparan, who has helped me for many years taking my dictations and laughing at all my jokes. Melissa lives in Alpine and works at Sul Ross.

For well over a decade Valerie Howard, also known as Crowcrumbs, has also assisted me with my column. She began illustrating them about five years ago when I could no longer do the photo-sketches that gave the column its namesake, High Desert Sketches.

Crowcrumbs currently lives in Houston, Texas. By day she works as a User Experience Designer, by night she illustrates and creates analog collages for various publications an art exhibits. She has been illustrating "High Desert Sketches" since 2012. She has a lucky black cat named Lucius and a husband, David Howard, whom she married in the Ghost Town church of Terlingua, Texas. They frequently make the drive back to west Texas for a Cow Dog or a hike in Big Bend.



Melissa Amparan



Valerie "Crowcrumbs" Howard and George Covington

Why building walls never worked

April 18, 2019

"You may be for or against the wall but one thing we can all agree on is that we need a complete overhaul of our immigration laws. Families and individuals wishing to seek refuge in this country should be able to know in advance the problems they will face. Their fate and their lives must not depend on the mercurial whims of one man's tweets. President Tweet and his followers are not only on the wrong side of history, they are on the wrong side of humanity."

Do you really know what you know?

April 4, 2019

"It is strange that since the election of the most divisive president of our history hate crimes toward both Jews and Muslims have increased in our country. I also find it strange that when pressed white nationalists and white racists all claim to be "good Christians." Perhaps John Milton explained it all when he said "The mind is its own place, and in itself can

make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

Blind Bard of the Big Bend's 2019 prophecies

January 17, 2019

"The last internationally renowned prophecy was borrowed from the Mayans and predicted that the world would end on December 21, 2012. The world didn't end for me, but I know it did end for thousands of people trying to cross into Europe to seek refugee status. It also ended for thousands of civilians in the Middle East. I've always contended that the success of a prophecy depends entirely on your personal perspective."

A 374-year-old word that still applies today

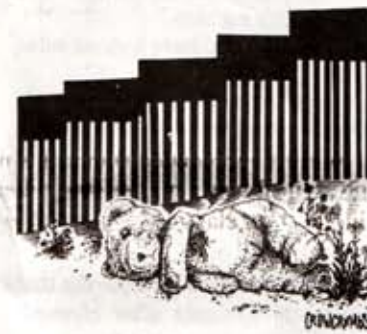
May 17, 2018

"Vivid examples of kakistocracy appear every day on both the national and state level. The Tweet administration crows almost daily that it is rolling back the onerous regulations that have tied down the nation's economy and crippled true capitalism... What the Tweetest doesn't say is that most of these regulations concern food safety, work safety, as well as water and air pollution... Texas had some of the nation's best examples of kakistocracy. A dirty little secret demonstrates my point about Texas government. Industries are routinely violating environmental laws by dumping excess chemicals and human waste into its rivers and bays, most often without consequence."

Frankenstein, technology, modern times

February 15, 2018

"Mary Shelley had no way of knowing that her creation would be called Frankenstein when in fact it was Dr. Frankenstein's monster, or that, like the monster, bits and pieces, both correct and incorrect, would rise again in countless retellings on radio, television, and in the movies.



Teddy bear at the wall



Mother Mary



Crowcrumbs

Ringtail prophet

Technology through the form of the personal computer and the internet provided a fertile soup for the baby Frankenstein's to come forth. The marvelous personnel computer and internet allowed millions of people to make new friends, enhance their love life, and meet psychopathic serial killers."

Speaking truth to power

February 1, 2018

"A few of my readers might think that my version of Trump and his Tweet Mania is a little over the top, but look at the reality of only a few days ago when he attended the WorldEconomicForum meeting in Davos, Switzerland...The irony of the situation is that our President was not invited, he invited himself and a number of his cabinet members. To avoid the embarrassment, which we feel every day, the forum's organizers invited him to speak on the last day and of course, he had to rant about fake news. Somebody should point out to President Tweet that every despotic ruler in recorded history has claimed that only he knows the truth and all contradictory statements to his truth are fake news."

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George A. Covington has worked in the fields of law, education, journalism and disability rights. He considers himself retired from every one of them with the possible exception of journalism. He is a graduate of the University of Texas schools of journalism and law. He moved to West Texas - Alpine - in 1997 after a 20-year career in Washington, D.C. where he once served on the staff of the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives (Democrat) and shortly thereafter served as Special Assistant to the Vice President of the United States (Republican) 1989-93.

Crowcrumbs is a Houston-based illustrator. Follow her on Instagram @crowcrumbs.



Crowcrumbs

Two-headed turtle



Crowcrumbs

Baby Frankenstein



Crowcrumbs

Twitter Trump

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